

Message Text

SECRET

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S E C R E T BOGOTA 7383

EXDIS

DEPT PASS TREASURY

TREASURY FOR FISHER

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2
TAGS: PINT, CO, VE, EC, BL
SUBJECT: INTERNAL POLITICAL AFFAIRS: SECRETARY BLUMENTHAL
AND ASST SECREATRY VAKY DISCUSS ECUADOR AND
BOLIVIA WITH VENEZUELAN PRESIDENT

REF: QUITO 5479 (NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY: TREASURY SECRETARY BLUMENTHAL AND ARA'S
ASSISTANT SECRETARY VAKY DISCUSSED THE ELECTORAL SITUATIONS
IN ECUADOR AND BOLIVIA WITH VENEZUELAN PRESIDENT PEREZ
IN A MEETING IN AUGUST 7. PEREZ SHARES THE USG'S
DESIRE TO SEE DEMOCRATIC PROCESSES CONTINUE IN BOTH
COUNTRIES AND, AS AS VAKY, WILL EMPHASIZE HIS
CONCERN OVER THIS MATTER IN THEIR SEPARATE MEETINGS HERE
WITH THE ECUADORIAN AND BOLIVIAN HEADS OF STATE.
END SUMMARY.

2. TREASURY SECREATRY BLUMENTHAL AND ASST SECREATARY
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FOR INTER-AMERICAN AFFAIRS VAKY MET WITH VENEZUELAN
PRESIDENT CARLOS ANRES PEREZ (CAP) ON AUGUST 7
BEFORE THE INAUGURATION OF THE NEW COLOMBIAN PRESIDENT.
FOLLOWING A DISCUSSION OF TRADE ISSUES (SEPTTEL),
AS VAKY ASKED FOR AN EXCHANGE OF IDEAS ON THE
ELECTORAL SITUATIONS IN ECUADOR AND BOLIVIA.

3. REGARDING ECUADOR, AS VAKY EXPRESSED THE CONCERN THAT THE ELECTORAL TRIBUNAL MIGHT BE MANIPULATED AND THE ELECTION RESULTS ALTERED. HE NOTED THAT THE USG HAD EXPRESSED ITS ADMIRATION FOR THE FREE ELECTIONS HELD THERE AND ASKED WHETHER CAP ALSO WOULD BE MEETING WITH ECUADORIAN JUNTA PRESIDENT PVEDA (AS VAKY IS SCHEDULED TO MEET WITH POVEDA AT 5:00 P.M. ON AUGUST 8 - SEPTTEL TO FOLLOW). PEREZ REPLIED AFFIRMATIVELY AND NOTED HIS OWN CONCERN OVER THE ECUADORIAN SITUATION, ADDING THAT THE FIRST ROUND WINNER ALSO WAS NOT ACTING WITH DISCRETION. HE CONCLUDED BY STATING THAT VENEZUELA WOULD OFFER TO POVEDA ITS SERVICES AS A MEDIATOR. AS VAKY COMMENTED THAT THERE WERE INDICATIONS OF EFFORTS TO REMOVE BUCARAM FROM THE ACTION AND THAT IT WAS NECESSARY TO CALM THE MILITARY AND URGE IT NOT TO INTERFERE.

4. TURNING TO THE SITUATION IN BOLIVIA, CAP SAID THAT HE HAD READ PEREDA'S AUGUST 6 SPEECH, WHICH HE FOUND ENCOURAGING, BUT THAT HE (CAP) FELT THAT 1980 WAS TOO LATE TO HOLD ANOTHER ELECTION. HE FEARED THAT PEREDA MIGHT BECOME ACCUSTOMED TO HIS NEW POSITION AND THAT ALTHOUGH PEREDA MIGHT NOT NOW FEEL STRONG ENOUGH, IT WOULD BE BETTER TO HOLD THE ELECTION BY THE MIDDLE OF 1979. AS VAKY (WHO MET WITH PEREDA LATER IN THE DAY - SEPTTEL TO FOLLOW) SAID THAT HE UNDERSTOOD THAT PEREDA HAD PERSONALLY
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HOPED TO HOLD A NEW ELECTION AROUND THE END OF 1979. HE STRESSED THE NEED FOR PEREDA TO WORK WITH THE BOLIVIAN MILITARY IN ORDER TO ENSURE A RETURN TO A MORE DEMOCRATIC SYSTEM, AND ADDED THAT THE USG CANNOT PUT TOO MUCH PRESSURE ON PEREDA FOR FEAR OF PROMPTING A NEGATIVE REACTION AND CHARGES OF INTERVENTION. IT WOULD BE HELPFUL, HE SAID, IF THE ANDEA PACT NATIONS, SUCH AS VENEZUELA, WOULD EXPRESS THEIR CONCERN TO THE BOLIVIANS AND URGE RESPECT FOR THE DEMOCRATIC PROCESS. PEREZ SAID THAT HE WAS MEETING TONIGHT (AUGUST 7) WITH PEREDA. HE FEARED THAT PEREDA'S PRESENT WEAK POSITION COULD LEAD TO A NEW COUP AND THAT A NEW ELECTION DATE OF 1980, WOULD GIVE PEREDA'S OPPONENTS A CHANCE TO UNITE AND TO EXERT FURTHER PRESSURE ON HIM, THUS FURTHER DISRUPTING THE SITUATION. CAP FELT THAT PEREDA COULD REACH AN AGREEMENT WITH PAZ ESTENSORO AND WALTER GUEVARA WHO MIGHT AGREE TO AN ELECTION IN MID-1979. SILAS, CAP SAID, IS MORE DIFFICULT, FAVORING AN ELECTION IMMEDIATELY FOR FEAR OF LOSING HIS LOOSELY UNITED FRONT WITH THE MIR AND THE COMMUNIST PARTY. AS VAKY REITERATED THAT THE USG COULD NOT PRESSURE THE BOLIVIANS REGARDING SPECIFIC DATES FOR A NEW ELECTIONS,

BUT THAT WE WOULD STRONGLY URGE THAT THE DEMOCRATIC PROCESS BE RENEWED ASAP. HE AGAIN EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT THE ANDEAN PACT NATIONS WOULD HELP ON THIS. PEREZ PROMISED THAT HE WOULD SPEAK FRANKLY WITH PEREDA IN BOGOTA, AND NOTED THAT BANZER IS STILL ACTIVE AND COULD BE A CANDIDATE IF ELECTIONS ARE POSTPONED UNTIL 1980. CAP SUGGESTED THAT THE BOLIVIANS AGREE TO BAR ANY FORMER PRESIDENT FROM BEING A CANDIDATE IN THE FUTURE.

5. AS VAKY IS CHEDULED TO MEET AGAIN WITH PRESIDENT PEREZ AT 7:00 A.M. ON AUGUST 8.
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